

LIFE IN THE SON

*A Study of the
Doctrine of
Perseverance*

..... ROBERT SHANK

Introduction by
William W. Adams

From Front Flap:

Tenth Printing, 1972, 35,000
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*A Study of the Doctrine of
Perseverance*

By

ROBERT SHANK

Introduction by
WILLIAM W. ADAMS, Th. D.

In a penetrating study of all pertinent New Testament Scriptures, the author (a Southern Baptist pastor) demonstrates that the supposed



Twenty years a Baptist minister, Robert Shank served churches in Kansas and Missouri. In addition to his pastoral ministry, he taught fourteen years at Faith

ELECT IN THE SON

BY
J. H. KELLOGG

Author of
"The Son of Man"

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*Elect in the Son: A Study of the
Doctrine of Election. A*

JESUS

HISTORY



From The Back Cover

From the Introduction ..

“I consider *Life in the Son* one of the most significant books in this generation. I consider it possible that the judgment of time may prove it to be one of the most important books ever written.

* * *

“If Mr. Shank is right in his interpretations and thesis, it is of the utmost importance for time and eternity that we come to share his understanding of the Scriptures. If he is wrong, it remains for us to refute his thesis by demonstrating that we are better exegetes and interpreters of Scripture than he has proved himself to be. In any event, a critical re-examination

Life in the Son

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life.

I JOHN 5:11, 12

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*To Him who loves us and freed us
from our sins with His own blood.*
REVELATION 1:5

PREFACE

IN THE DAYS of the Apostles, explicit answers to essential questions of doctrine were available from men to whom our Lord had personally committed "the faith once delivered unto the saints." Exact definition of doctrine is today a more difficult problem. Definitions lie within the Scriptures; but what saith the Scripture? In some important areas of doctrine, sincere men disagree. We cannot appeal to "them that heard Him" for definitions beyond what the Scriptures now afford. Earnest inquiry into the meaning of the Scriptures is therefore imperative.

blessed through the continued
ministry of the book.

R. S.

Louisburg, Missouri
February 14, 1961

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- 1. BY GRACE, THROUGH FAITH**
- 2. THE HIGH COST OF A FREE GIFT**
- 3. LIFE IN THE SON**
- 4. CAN ETERNAL LIFE BE
FORFEITED?**
- 5. WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?**
- 6. SHALL NEVER THIRST**
- 7. BORN OF GOD**
- 8. THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT**
- 9. ONCE FOR ALL**
- 10. AN ADVOCATE WITH THE
FATHER**

FATHER GIVE TO JESUS?	1
APPENDIX C: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ROMANS 9-11	2
APPENDIX D: CALVIN'S VIEW OF REPROBATION, AND HIS ERRONEOUS FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTION	3
APPENDIX E: OTHER SCRIPTURES TO WHICH ADVOCATES OF THE DOCTRINE OF UNCONDITIONAL SECURITY COMMONLY APPEAL	4
BIBLIOGRAPHY	5
INDEX	6
INDEX OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES	7

INTRODUCTION

BY WILLIAM W. ADAMS

WE ARE DEEPLY INDEBTED to those people who, rooted firmly

But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

ACTS 15:11

Chapter 1: BY GRACE, THROUGH FAITH

THEY HAD COME TOGETHER to consider a matter of grave importance. The church at Jerusalem, as elsewhere, was divided. Certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed (Acts 15:5) were insisting that believing in Jesus was good - as far as it went; but merely to trust in Christ and His saving grace was not enough. It was necessary that Gentile converts be circumcised and assume the obligations of the law of Moses.

came together to consider this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter arose and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God who knoweth the hearts bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be

guilt of man. The cross of Jesus demands that we confess that" . . . all have sinned and come short of the glory of God ... There is none righteous, no, not one . . . We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Well did Isaac Watts write:

**When I survey the wondrous
cross
On which the Prince of glory
died.
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my
pride.**

Accepting Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior from sin is a humbling experience. It requires the surrender of all confidence

in one's assumed goodness and in the supposed redemptive merit of all his best endeavors. But only thus can one be saved.

Jesus is a Savior, not of the righteous, but of sinners. ... He does not wait until they are pure and holy, then to be spiritually betrothed unto them; but He betroths Himself unto them that they may become pure and holy. ... He says not, "Get thyself clean, wise, and rich; and as a rich bride I will betroth thee unto Me"; but, "I take thee just as thou art. I say unto thee, in thy blood. Live. Tho thou art poor, betrothing thee, I will make thee partaker of Myself and My treasure. But a treasure of thine

own thou shall never possess.”

[Abraham Kuyper, The Work of the Holy Spirit, p. 334 f.]

Someone has well said that we are saved, not through our attainment, but through His atonement. This seems a hard truth for many to accept. In his sermon "Christ's Last Invitation From the Throne," Alexander Maclaren said:

. . . the one thing that Christ asks me to do is to trust my poor sinful self wholly and confidently and constantly and obediently to Him. That is all. Ah! All! And that is just where the pinch comes. . . . Naaman's strange reluctance to do a little thing in order to produce a

great effect, whilst he was willing to take a mint of trouble in order to produce it, is repeated over and over again amongst us. You will see men buy damnation dear who will not have salvation because it is a gift and they have nothing to do. I do believe that great multitudes of people would rather, like the Hindoos, stick hooks in the muscles of their backs and swing at the end of a rope if that would get heaven for them, than to simply be content to come in forma pauperis and owe everything to Christ's grace and nothing to their own works.

[Alexander Maclaren,
*Expositions of Holy Scripture:
Revelation, p. 400 f.*]

dead that finds no expression in good works.

But even so, all “good works” are vain that are not the fruit of simple faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, by the grace of God. A barren faith is of no avail; but it is still faith, not works, which saves.

**Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
These for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou
alone.**

**Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy Cross I cling.**

AUGUSTUS M. TOPLADY

The story is told of a mother

wages of sin is death.” That is justice. But thank God, there is mercy: “The gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I John 4:9, 10

The High Cost of a Free Gift

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

EPHESIANS 2:8

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ROMANS 6:23

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

II CORINTHIANS 9:15

Chapter 2: THE HIGH COST OF A FREE GIFT

THE BEST THINGS in life are free, according to the popular maxim. But what is more, life itself is free—life abundant and eternal. In his letter to the Romans, Paul speaks of justification, righteousness, and life as "the free gift" and "the gift by grace" (5:15-18) and declares that while "the wages of sin is death . . . the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Salvation is offered only as God's free gift to men. It must be so received. This, many seem unable to understand.

An aged Moslem, an influential citizen of Egypt, recently testified of his faith and hope in

all who would be His for time
and eternity.

**Jesus, I my cross have taken.
All to leave and follow Thee;
Destitute, despised, forsaken—
Thou, from hence, my all shall
be.**

**Perish every fond ambition.
All I've sought and hoped and
known;
Yet how rich is my condition:
God and heaven are now my
own!**

Henry F. Lyte (adapted)

Life in the Son

*That which was from the beginning,
which we have heard, which we have*

seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the Word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.

** * **

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

I JOHN 1:1, 2; 5:11-13

Chapter 3: LIFE IN THE SON

IT IS SAID that in World War II, a

rather, "My God." And God had forsaken Him. He was alone in His agony of body and desolation of soul and spirit. The Son of man, made sin for all the guilty sons of Adam and banished from the Fathers' holy presence, cried in all the very anguish of hell itself, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He "poured out his soul unto death."

**But none of the ransomed ever
knew
How deep were the waters
crossed;
Nor how dark was the night the
Lord passed through
Ere He found His sheep that
was lost.**

[Elizabeth C. Clephane, from

been forever satisfied. In the cross of Christ, wrath and grace have met. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed” at the cross of Him who is our peace. God now can be “just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.” Atonement has been wrought in Christ—an objective atonement efficacious for all who believe.

Even if no man should ever say, “Thou, O Christ, art all I want; more than all in Thee I find,” God says it. Christ and His work have this absolute value for the Father, whatever this or that individual may think of them. And as it is only on the basis of Christ and His work that

reconciliation becomes an accomplished fact, it is strict truth to say that reconciliation—in the sense of man's return to God and acceptance with Him—is based on an objective atonement. It is because divine necessities have had homage done to them by Christ that the way is open for sinners to return to God through Him.

[James Denney, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation, p. 235.]

An objective reconciliation has been accomplished for all mankind. Jesus “gave himself a ransom for all” (I Tim. 2:6) and “by the righteousness of [Jesus] the free gift came upon all men

is to have life; for “Christ is our life” (Col. 3:4). Kuyper writes:

It is true that in the soul of the regenerated there is a vital principle, but the source of its energy is outside of ourselves in Christ. There is indwelling, but not interpermeation. The dweller and his house are distinct. Hence in the regenerated man life is extraneous, its seat is not in himself. ... To obtain gas from the city's gas-works is one thing; to manufacture it at one's own cost, in one's own establishment, is quite another. The regenerated child of God receives life directly from Christ, who is outside of him at the right hand of God,

Chapter 4: CAN ETERNAL LIFE BE FORFEITED?

CHRISTIANS LONG have been divided over the question of whether a man, once saved, can subsequently forfeit salvation. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints popularly defined as “once in grace, always in grace” has been championed with fervor by millions of sincere Christians and devout Bible scholars. It has been opposed with equal fervor by other millions equally sincere and devout.

Unfortunately, Christian charity often has been cast aside in the fervor of contention by good men on both sides. It should not be so. Some Christian

the Holy Scriptures. To them must be addressed our first and final appeal in our consideration of the doctrine of the security of the believer.

I.

In the present chapter, we shall consider four discourses of Jesus, the first of which is Luke's account of our Lord's interpretation of His Parable of the Sower (chapter 8):

11. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

13. They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive

the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14. And that which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15. But that on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Let us make two observations concerning the words of our Lord. First, it is possible for one to believe only temporarily (v. 13). We are confronted, of course, with the question of

that an initial reception of the word of the Gospel must be followed by faithful retention, if men are to continue in the saving grace of Christ and the eternal life of God.

II.

The second discourse of Jesus which we shall consider is His parable of the Lord and His Steward (Luke 12):

42. And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise Steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

43. Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44. Of a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45. But and if that servant say in his heart. My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken,

46. The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

It has been argued by some that the unfaithful steward of verses 45, 46 was never a true disciple, but only a hypocrite from the beginning, and the Lord's

It is obvious that Jesus' parable has no application to men who do not know Him as Savior and Lord, and who have not sincerely undertaken to follow and serve Him. His parable concerns only men who know Him and to whom He commits solemn responsibilities as His true disciples.

A correct analysis of the parable is as follows:

The Question (v. 42): "Who is the faithful and wise steward" whom his Lord will reward at his coming?

The Answer (v. 43): "That servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" as instructed.

The Reward (v. 44): “He will make him ruler over all that he hath.”

The Peril (v. 45): “That servant” may grow careless and become unfaithful during his lord's long absence.

The Penalty (v. 46): The lord will come unexpectedly and “cut him in sunder” and “appoint him his portion with the unbelievers” (or the “unfaithful”).

[Apistos may mean “unfaithful” in the sense of unbelieving, incredulous; or of unreliable, untrustworthy. The precise meaning of the word in v. 46 is of no consequence, as the Scriptures everywhere affirm that faithfulness

service as an apostle. Commenting on I Corinthians 9:27, Robertson writes:

Most writers take Paul to refer to the possibility of his rejection in his personal salvation at the end of the race. He does not claim absolute perfection (Phil. 3:12) and so he presses on. At the end he has serene confidence (II Tim. 4:7) with the race run and won. It is a humbling thought for us all to see this wholesome fear instead of smug complacency in this greatest of all heralds of Christ.

[Ibid. p. 150]

III.

The third discourse of Jesus

which we shall consider is the Parable of the Law of Forgiveness (Matthew 18):

21. Then came Peter to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22. Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but until seventy times seven.

23. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.

24. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents.

25. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord

commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28. But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet and besought him, saying. Have patience with

me, and I will pay thee all.

30. And he would not, but went and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt.

31. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry and came and told their lord all that was done.

32. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me:

33. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34. And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35. So likewise shall my

body and blood of Him who is our life (John 15):

1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.

3. Already ye are clean because of the word which I have

4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in me.

5. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing.

6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

These words of our Lord contain a cardinal axiom of the Christian life—indeed, the foundation principle governing the relation of Christ and the individual throughout his earthly sojourn in a moral and spiritual universe. Every pertinent Bible passage and every consideration of the question of the individual's relation to the Savior must be equated and evaluated in the light of this foundation principle enunciated by our Lord.

The Father is the source of life and so “I live because of the Father” (kdgo zo dia ton patera). He that eateth me (ho trogon me). Still bolder putting of the mystical appropriation of Christ (51, 53, 54, 56). Because of me (di' erne). The same idea appears in 14:19: "Because I live ye shall live also." See 11:25. Jesus Christ is our ground of hope and guarantee of immortality. Life is in Christ. ... As the Father is the fount of life to Christ, so Christ is the fount of life to us.

[Robertson, op. cit., Vol. V, p. 112 f.]

What Robertson speaks of as “the mystical appropriation of Christ” is more than a punctiliar

meaning, and their influence imposes a durative quality upon the present participles which, under other circumstances, they might possibly lack because of the presence of the article. Virtually all contemporary translators have recognized this fact. Consider, for example:

Williams: "Whoever continues to eat my flesh and drink my blood continues to live in union with me and I in union with him. Just as the living Father has sent me and I live because of the Father, so whoever keeps on eating me will live because of me."

["From The New Testament: A Translation in the Language of the People, by Charles B.

live through the Father, so he who nourishes on Me shall live through Me."

["From The Berkeley Version of The New Testament, by Gerrit Verkuyl, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Used by permission.]

Let us now state the foundation principle governing the relation of Christ and the individual, as implied in the words of Jesus in John 15:1-6:

Throughout his earthly sojourn, the relation of the individual to Christ is never a static relationship existing as the irrevocable consequence of a past decision, act, or experience. Rather, it is a

present mutual indwelling of the believer and the Savior, the sharing of a common life which emanates from Him "who is our life" (Col. 3:4). For the believer, it is a living participation proceeding upon a living faith in a living Savior. The principle is reduced to its simplest statement in the words of Jesus, "Abide in me, and I in you" (John 15:4).

Let us observe three essential truths in our Lord's teaching in John 15:1-6. First, the mutual indwelling of the disciples and the Savior is dependent upon the volition of the disciples. "Abide [meno, dwell, remain, continue] in me. and I in you" (v. 4). The indwelling of Christ

supplied by AV is not in the Greek text.] gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned” (vv. 2a, 6). Robertson comments:

The only way to continue “clean” (pruned) and to bear fruit is to maintain vital spiritual connexion with Christ (the vine). Judas is gone and Satan will sift the rest of them like wheat (Luke 22:31 f.). Blind complacency is a peril to the preacher. . . . There is nothing for a broken off branch to do but wither and die. . . . The apostles are thus vividly warned against presumption. Jesus as the vine will fulfil his part of the relation as long as the branches keep in vital

In his sermon "The True Branches of the True Vine," Alexander Maclaren, the famed British Baptist expositor, said:

. . . even at that moment, our Lord, in all His tenderness and pity, could not but let words of warning-grave, solemn, tragical-drop from His lips. This generation does not like to hear them, for its conception of the Gospel is a thing with no minor notes in it, with no threatenings. . . . But Jesus Christ could not speak about the blessedness of fruitfulness and the joy of life in Himself without speaking about its necessary converse, the awfulness of separation from Him, of barrenness, of

withering, and of destruction. Separation is withering. Did you ever see a hawthorn bough that children bring home from the woods and stick in the grate; how in a day or two the little fresh green leaves all shrivel up and the white blossoms become brown and smell foul, and the only thing to be done with it is to fling it into the fire and get rid of it? "And so," says Jesus Christ, "as long as a man holds on to Me and the sap comes into him, he will flourish; and as soon as the connection is broken, all that was so fair will begin to shrivel, and all that was green will grow brown and turn to dust, and all that was blossom will droop, and there will be no more fruit

any more forever."

Withering means destruction.

The language of our text is a description of what befalls the actual branches of the literal vine; but it is made a representation of what befalls the individuals whom these branches represent, by that added clause, "like a branch."

Look at the mysteriousness of the language. "They gather them." Who? "They cast them into the fire." Who have the tragic task of flinging the withered branches into some mysterious fire? All is left vague with unexplained awfulness. The solemn fact that the withering of manhood by separation from Jesus Christ requires and ends in the

consuming of the withered is all that we have here. We have to speak of it pityingly, with reticence, with terror, with tenderness, with awe lest it should be our fate.

But O, dear brethren! be on your guard against the tendency of the thinking of this generation to paste a bit of blank paper over all the threatenings of the Bible, and to blot out from its consciousness the grave issues that it holds forth. One of two things must befall the branch, either it is in the Vine or it gets into the fire. If we would avoid the fire, let us see to it that we are in the Vine.

*[Alexander Maclaren,
Expositions of Holy Scripture:*

St. John, Vol. II, pp. 15-17.]

**How blest are they who still
abide
Close shelter'd in Thy bleeding
side!**

**Who life and strength from
Thee derive,
And by Thee move, and in Thee
live.**

**Firstborn of many brethren
Thou!
To Thee, lo, all our souls we
bow;
To Thee our hearts and hands
we give;
Thine may we die, Thine may
we live.**

Zinzendorp (tr. Wesley)

"What Saith the Scripture?"

Chapter 5: WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

THERE IS A SOLEMN FINALITY about the words of John: “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life” (1 John 5:11, 12).

What are the conditions whereby men may have the Son of God and life in Him? Believers of the Scriptures all agree: “repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). But not all agree as to the essential *circumstance* of repentance and saving faith. Many believe that saving faith is the act of a

God somehow implants a bit of eternal life within the soul of the individual in such a way that it becomes his inalienable personal possession *ipso facto*. Certainly eternal life is *eternal*. But the Bible declares that eternal life—the very life of God Himself—can only be *shared* with men. It cannot be possessed by men apart from a living union with Christ, in and through whom that life is available to men. Maclaren has well said:

Union with Christ by faith is the condition of a real communication of life. “In Him was life.” says John's Gospel, meaning thereby to assert, in the language of [Col. 1:16, 17],

that “in Him were all things created, and in Him all things consist.” Life in all its forms is dependent on union in varying manner with the Divine, and upheld only by His continual energy. The creature must touch God or perish. Of that energy the Uncreated Word of God is the channel—“with Thee is the fountain of life.” As the life of the body, so the higher self-conscious life of the thinking, feeling, striving soul is also fed and kept alight by the perpetual operation of a higher Divine energy, imparted in like manner by the Divine Word. Therefore, with deep truth, the psalm just quoted goes on to say, “In Thy light shall we see light”—and therefore, too,

John's Gospel continues: "And the life was the light of men." But there is a still higher plane on which life may be manifested, and nobler energies which may accompany it. The body may live, and mind and heart be dead. Therefore Scripture speaks of a threefold life: that of the animal nature, that of the intellectual and emotional nature, and that of the spirit, which lives when it is conscious of God and touches Him by aspiration, hope, and love. This is the loftiest life. Without it, a man is dead while he lives. With it, he lives though he dies. And like the others, it depends on union with the Divine life as it is stored in Jesus Christ; but

in this case, the union is a conscious union by faith. If I trust to Him, and am thereby holding firmly by Him. my union with Him is so real that, in the measure of my faith, His fullness passes over into my emptiness. His righteousness into my sinfulness. His life into my death, as surely as the electric shock thrills my nerves when I grasp the poles of the battery.

No man can breathe into another's nostrils the breath of life. But Christ can and does breathe His life into us; and this true miracle of a communication of spiritual life takes place in every man who humbly trusts himself to Him.

I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die (John 11:25,26).

. . . Christ, who is our life . . . (Col. 3:4).

The gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:23 ASV).

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled, of the Word of life: For the life was manifested, and we

have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. . . . And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life. . . . Let that therefore remain in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even the eternal life
(I John 1:1,2; 5:11,12; 2:24,25).

There can be no question

Tholuek declares:

The Reformed Church (the Calvinistic) bases on v. 28 the doctrine that the regenerate can never apostatize. Christ undoubtedly says that no power can snatch away his sheep from him, (Romans 8:37-39); but he furnishes also the marks of his sheep, and only so far as the stipulations contained in v. 27 and 28 are fulfilled, so far consequently as the disciple of Christ continues with Christ, (John 8:31), is he invincible.

[August Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel St. John, p. 266.]

Hengstenberg protests:

. . . [God's] power remains the safeguard of the property of the Son which is common to Him with the Father. Can this guaranty insure believers against the consequences of their own unfaithfulness, as Hengstenberg asserts? The text says nothing like this. The question is of enemies from without who seek to carry off the sheep, but not of unfaithfulness through which the sheep would themselves cease to be sheep.

[Frederick Louis Godet, Commentary on the Gospel of John, Vol. II, p. 162.]

The promise of Christ to safeguard His followers does

not relieve them of the necessity of *following* Him. Meyer declares:

The lost sheep, i.e. the sheep which has been separated, and wandered away from the flock (Matt. 10:6; Luke 15: 4), typifies him who is separated from the protection and gracious leading of Christ, and has fallen into unbelief. . . . Liberty and the possibility of apostasy are not thus excluded (in answer to Augustine and the teaching of the Reformed Church); he who has fallen away is no longer a [sheep]. . . .

[H. A. W. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Gospel of John, p. 329.]

Westcott comments:

The doctrine of "final perseverance" has been found in this passage. But we must carefully distinguish between the certainty of God's promises and His infinite power on the one hand, and the weakness and variableness of man's will on the other. If man falls at any stage in his spiritual life, it is not from want of divine grace, nor from the overwhelming power of adversaries, but from his neglect to use that which he may or may not use. We cannot be protected against ourselves in spite of ourselves.

[B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John, p. 158.]

the future. But the Greek perfect tense makes no affirmation concerning the future. It affirms two things: the fact of an action in the past, and the fact of the continued existence of the results of the action, as of the present moment (the moment of speaking). It makes no affirmation whatever with respect to the future.

In its most frequent use the Perfect Indicative represents an action as standing at the time of speaking complete. The reference of the tense is thus double; it implies a past action and affirms an existing result. . . . It is important to observe that the term "complete" or "completed" as a grammatical

experience. James Denney has well said:

. . . there is nothing superficial in what the New Testament calls faith ... It is not simply the act of an instant, it is the attitude of a life; it is the one right thing at the moment when a man abandons himself to Christ, and it is the one thing which keeps him right with God for ever. It is just as truly the whole of Christianity subjectively as Christ is the whole of it objectively.

.....
Nothing can by any possibility go beyond faith, and the whole promise and potency of Christianity are present in it. The sinner who through faith is

right with God is certainly not made perfect in holiness, but the power which alone can make him perfect is already really and vitally operative in him. And it is operative in him only in and through his faith.

.....
Grace is not a thing which can be infused [and] there are no gifts of grace which, so to speak, can be lodged bodily in the soul. Grace is the attitude of God to man which is revealed and made sure in Christ, and the only way in which it becomes effective in us for new life is when it wins [from] us the response of faith. And just as grace is the whole attitude of God in Christ to sinful men, so faith is the whole attitude of the

sinful soul as it surrenders itself to that grace. Whether we call it the life of the justified, or the life of the reconciled, or the life of the regenerate, or the life of grace or of love, the new life is the life of faith and nothing else. To maintain the original attitude of welcoming God's love as it is revealed in Christ bearing our sins—not only to trust it, but to go on trusting—not merely to believe in it as a mode of transition from the old to the new, but to keep on believing—to say with every breath we draw, "Thou, O Christ, art all I want; more than all in Thee I find"—is not a part of the Christian life, but the whole of it.

.....

“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no more I that live, but Christ liveth in me.” On the basis of such expressions as these the doctrine of a union—sometimes it is called a mystical union—of Christ and the Christian has been supported; and either justification or reconciliation itself, or the life of the justified and reconciled, is explained by reference to this union. The objective atonement, the finished work of Christ on the cross, is viewed with impatience if it is not denied, and union with Christ, participation in His death and resurrection, is regarded as something far higher and finer and containing far surer

guarantees for a new and holy life than mere trust in one who died for our sins. Such a mode of thought, however, involves a complete departure from New Testament lines. Certainly the New Testament is full of the idea that the Christian is united to Christ, that in a real sense he is one with his Lord. But he is one with Him simply and solely through faith.

[James Denney, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation, pp. 291-303.]

“Abide [*meno*, remain] in me, and I in you.” The faith on which our union with Christ depends is not the act of some past moment. It is a present living faith in a living Savior.

twistings and turnings done here.” Chafer writes:

Two issues appear in this context: that of God's work for man and that of man's work for God. In fact, the contrast between divine responsibility and human responsibility appears many times in the Colossian Epistle. No end of doctrinal disorder has been engendered by the disarrangement of these so widely different ideas. A worthy student will not rest until he can trace his way through, and separate, these two lines of truth.

[Chafer, Systematic Theology, Vol. III, p. 307.]

It is interesting to observe how Chafer manages to “trace his way through and separate these two lines of truth” in Colossians 1:21-23:

Because of a misleading punctuation which introduces only a comma after the word death, the two lines of thought have been not only connected, but the work of God for man has been supposed to depend on man's work for God. That would be acceptable the Arminian interpretation of doctrine, but it is not the meaning of the passage.

[Chafer's charge is unfair. It cannot be established from the writings of Arminius that he believed or taught that "the work

new part of the sentence with the next word to. This arrangement, without changing any words, divides properly between the two aspects of truth which are wholly unrelated in the sense that they are not interdependent. Thus the text is rescued from implying what it does not, that the work of God depends on the work of man.

[Chafer, op. cit., p. 307 f.]

It is true that ancient writers customarily joined words and sentences together in unbroken lines, and the earliest Greek uncials extant reveal that punctuation marks were few and were used most sparingly by copyists, if at all. We must

and the Apostles, instead of “explaining” them into total irrelevance through ingenious interpretations or deftly circumventing them by theological hypothesis? And some of us may well ask ourselves. Shall we continue to avoid preaching to our congregations the urgent warnings which Paul and others so faithfully sounded to believers in their day?

And when they had preached the gospel to [Derbe] and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue [emmeno, remain, persevere,

Chapter 6: SHALL NEVER THIRST

To TIMOTHY at Ephesus, the Apostle Paul wrote, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine."

The saints are much in debt to the men of God who diligently labor in the Word and doctrines of the holy faith. Great are their responsibilities, for their task is fraught with grave eternal consequences. To expound the saving Word to immortal souls, who according to their understanding and response to that Word will forever dwell in the light of life eternal or in the shades of second death, is not a

capable scholars have erred in their interpretation of important passages.

In his book *Treasures From the Greek New Testament for the English Reader*, Dr. Kenneth S. Wuest writes:

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:13, 14).

The first occurrence of the word "drinketh" is in a construction in the Greek which refers to continuous action, and the second use of the word in the

original presents the mere fact of the action without reference to the progress of the action. The fuller translation therefore reads, “Every one who keeps on constantly drinking of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever takes a drink of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst.” . . . The person who keeps on drinking of the wells of the world, lifeless, dull, brackish, polluted, stale, will thirst again. The world with all its sin does not satisfy, never can. But the person who takes one drink of the spring of eternal life never thirsts again.

The reason why one drink satisfies is that when the sinner takes one drink of eternal life,

that one drink becomes in him
a spring of water leaping up
into a fountain of eternal life. . .
. The one drink itself is a spring
that ever keeps bubbling up,
ever refreshing and satisfying
the one who takes a drink of the
water of life.

*[Kenneth S. Wuest, Treasures
From the Greek New Testament
for the English Reader, p. 29 f.]*

Dr. Wuest's interpretation
implies that a moment's act of
faith in Christ effects a state of
grace which is self-perpetuating
and irrevocable. The total
context of Scripture, however,
affirms that while the divine
provision of grace is constant
and perpetual, man's
appropriation can only be

The action represented by a given aorist may indeed be point-action; but as far as language is concerned, it may quite as well be linear. Robertson declares:

The "constative" aorist just treats the act as a single whole entirely irrespective of the parts or time involved. If the act is a point in itself, well and good. But the aorist can be used also of an act which is not a point. This is the advance that the tense makes on the verb-root. All aorists are punctiliar in statement (cf. Moulton, Prol., p. 109). The "constative" aorist treats an act as punctiliar which is not in itself point-action.

[A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of

the Greek New Testament In the Light of Historical Research, p. 832, italics his.]

This latitude of the aorist is found in the dependent moods, as well as in the indicative:

The aorist of the dependent moods represents the action expressed by the verb as a simple event or fact, without reference either to its progress or to the existence of its result. As in the Indicative the verb may be indefinite, inceptive, or resultative, and when indefinite may refer to a momentary or extended action or to a series of events.

[Ernest De Witt Burton, Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New

The words of our Savior in John 7:37, 38 were

. . . probably suggested by the libations of water drawn from the Pool of Siloam each morning of the feast (while Isa. 12:3 was sung), and carried in a golden vessel by a procession of priests who poured it over the altar at the morning sacrifice. If it was discontinued on the eighth day, as seems probable, in token of their having come into “a land of springs of water,” the proclamation of Jesus in the temple would be none the less impressive as the offer of satisfaction for the soul whose thirst no Jewish ritual could quench.

him take the water of life freely.
Isaiah 55:1, Revelation 22:17

"Born of God"

*Verily, verily, I say unto thee,
Except a man be born again, he
cannot see the kingdom of God . . .
Except a man be born of water and
of the Spirit, he cannot enter into
the kingdom of God. That which is
born of the flesh is flesh, and that
which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*
JOHN 3:3,5,6

*Of his own will begat he us with
the word of truth, that we should be
a kind of firstfruits of his
creatures.... Wherefore lay aside all
filthiness and prevailing
wickedness, and receive with
meekness the implanted word which
is able to save your souls.*

JAMES 1:18, 21

Chapter 7: BORN OF GOD

IT WAS NIGHT. NO prudent man went about the dark streets of Jerusalem alone at night unless his mission was urgent. There were perils of robbers lying in wait in darkened doorways along the narrow streets, and of Roman soldiers who often were suspicious and impatient with men who ventured out at night. But Nicodemus the Pharisee, a member of the Sanhedrin and a man of position in Jerusalem, had come to Jesus by night. Perhaps, more than robbers or Roman soldiers, he feared embarrassment in the eyes of his colleagues, should he be seen

words of Jesus seemed strange and mysterious:

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee. Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where

Nicodemus should have understood just how the Spirit effects the spiritual birth of men. The birth of the Spirit involves “heavenly things” which lie hidden in the wisdom and power of God, things which are not intelligible for finite man.

Beneath all definitions [of the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration] there remains the mystery of life, and the mystery of the action of Spirit upon spirit. What this spiritually vivifying touch of God is, no man will ever know. Probably regeneration itself is never a matter of actual consciousness to a man. It is apparent in its consequences, but is not discerned in itself; hence we

death.

A corpse may be embalmed, stuffed with herbs, and encased as a mummy. Its corruption is invisible, all unsightliness carefully concealed. So do many men embalm the dead soul, fill it with fragrant herbs, and wrap it like a mummy in a shroud of self-righteousness so that, of the indwelling corruption, scarcely anything appears. But as the Egyptians by their embalming never could restore life unto their dead, so can these soul-mummies with all their Egyptian arts never kindle one spark of life in their dead souls.

[Abraham Kuyper, The Work of

name." Westcott comments on John 1:12:

As far as we can conceive of "this right to become children," it lies in the potential union with the Son, whereby those who receive Him are enabled to realize their divine fellowship. ... It is important to observe how throughout the passage the divine and human sides of the realization of Sonship are harmoniously united. The initial act is at once a "begetting" (egennethesan) and a "reception" (elabon). . . . The issue is complete on the part of God, but man must bring it to pass by continuous exertion (genesthai tekna, tois pisteuousin). . . . The words (to

them that believe) are in apposition with the preceeding them. The effective reception of Christ is explained to be the continuous energy of faith which relies upon Him as being for the believer that which He has made Himself known to be.

[B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John, p. 9.]

To think of the new birth exclusively as a transformation wrought by the Spirit at the moment of conversion is to have an inadequate concept of the doctrine as defined in the Holy Scriptures. There are two aspects of the new birth: the initial experience (conversion), and sustained relationship (perseverance). Of the twenty

such statements as these:

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels (Rev. 3:4,5).

. . . exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. . . . We glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and

tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer (Acts 14:22, II Thess. 1:4,5).

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son (Rev. 21:7).

Despite the objections of Chafer and other sincere advocates of the doctrine of unconditional security, our sonship remains conditional throughout our earthly sojourn in God's moral universe. Consider Paul's warning: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh,

of faith are necessarily men who never have known Christ in a true saving relationship.

The First Epistle of John depicts clearly the continuing conditional aspect of the new birth. Let us consider a logical syllogism derived from John's assertions in 2:29-3:10:

Major Premise:

All who stand begotten of God avoid habitual deliberate sinning (v. 9).

Minor Premise:

Only those who abide in Christ avoid habitual deliberate sinning (v. 6).

Conclusion:

Only those who abide in Christ

stand begotten of God.

Men who would see the kingdom of God will do well to ponder and heed *all* that the Holy Scriptures declare concerning the new birth which God, in mercy and love, has made possible for the children of men, that they may be part of His everlasting kingdom and forever share His own eternal life.

"The Earnest of the Spirit"

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

II CORINTHIANS 1:21, 22

In whom ye also trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, having believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

EPHESIANS 1:13, 14

And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

EPHESIANS 4:30

Chapter 8: THE EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT

HAVE YOU EVER thanked God for Himself? Have you thanked

of the ultimate fulfillment of His purpose in their redemption: His own Spirit, sent to dwell in the hearts of His pilgrim sons. Paul declares that the Holy Spirit is both the seal and the earnest of our final redemption:

God “has sealed [sphragizo, set an official mark upon] us and given the earnest of the Spirit [ton arrabona tou pneumatos, genitive of apposition: the Spirit is Himself the earnest] in our hearts” (II Cor. 1:22).

“Ye were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit [toi pneumati, instrumental case: the Spirit is the instrument of sealing] who is the earnest of our inheritance until the

redemption of the purchased possession” (Eph. 1:13,14).

“Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom [en hoi, the Spirit is the element in which we are sealed] ye were sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30).

The Holy Spirit is the official seal of God’s ownership, and the believer’s God-given earnest of his promised inheritance as a son and heir of God. Wonderful! But there is more: the Spirit is continually at work in the believer to bring to consummation all that is within the perfect will of God for all His sons in Christ. The gracious Comforter, our Paraclete on

as well). Consider verse 7: “It is right for me to think this of you all” (i.e., that God's perfecting work in them would continue until the day of Christ) because they were standing fast with Paul in the defense and confirmation of the Gospel in the face of growing persecution which, even then, left Paul in bonds. Again, the steadfastness of their fellowship in the Gospel in the past (v. 5), as Meyer declares

. . . forms also the ground of [Paul's] just confidence for the future. . . . [Their fellowship in the Gospel], from the first day until now, is that which alone can warrant and justify [Paul's]

confidence for the future. . . .
That which [God] has begun He
will complete, namely by the
further operations of His grace.
The idea of resistance to this
grace, as a human possibility,
is not thereby excluded; but
Paul has not to fear this on the
part of his Philippian converts,
as he formerly had in the case
of the Galatians (Gal. 1:6; 3:3).

*[H . A. W. Meyer, Critical and
Exegetical Hand-Book to the
Epistles to the Philippians and
Colossians, and to Philemon, p.
13 f.]*

The faithfulness of God is
beyond question. But the faith
and faithfulness of men (the two
are inseparably involved,
according to the Scriptures) is

faithfulness? Maclaren writes:

. . . what attitude in us corresponds to the faithfulness of God? I need only quote one of the expressions in the Epistle to the Hebrews to give the answer, "Hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering, for He is faithful that promised." Our faith corresponds with and is the answer to God's faithfulness. As with two instruments tuned to the same pitch, when a note is struck on the one, the chords of the other vibrate it back again, so God's faithfulness should awake the music of answering faith in our responsive and vibrating hearts. If He is worth trusting,

let us trust Him.

.....

The progressive perfecting of the Christian life is guaranteed by the thought of the faithfulness of God. He does not begin a work and then get disgusted with it, or turn to something else, or find that His resources will not avail to work it out to completion.

.....

None that look on God's work will ever have the right to say, "This man began to build, and was not able to finish." There are no half-completed failures in God's workshop. Only you have to keep yourself under His influences. It is useless to talk about the "final perseverance of the saints" unless you

remember that only they who continuously yield themselves to God are continuously the subjects of His cleansing and hallowing grace. If they do, the progressive perfecting of those upon whom He has begun to work is sure.

[Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of Holy Scripture: Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews, pp. 66,64 f.]

Commenting on Hebrews 7:22 ("Jesus was made a surety of a better covenant"), Westcott declares, "Christ is not said to be a surety for man to God, but a surety of a covenant of God with man."

Preaching from Ephesians 4:30
("Grieve not the Holy Spirit of
God, whereby ye are sealed unto
the day of redemption"),
Maclaren said:

We have here a plain warning
as to the possibility of thwarting
[the Holy Spirit's] influences.
Nothing here about irresistible
grace; nothing here about a
power that lays hold upon a
man and makes him good, he
lying passive in its hands like
clay in the hands of the potter!
You will not be made holy
without the Divine Spirit; but
you will not be made holy
without your working along with
it. There is a possibility of
resisting, and there is a
possibility of co-operating. Man

is left free. God does not lay hold of anyone by the hair of his head and drag him into paths of righteousness whether he will or no. . . . We have to work with God, and we can resist. Ay, and there is a deeper and a sadder word than that applied by the same Apostle in another letter to the same subject. We can “quench” the light and extinguish the fire.

What extinguishes it? Look at the catalogue of sins that lie side by side with this exhortation of my text. They are all small matters—bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil-speaking, malice, stealing, lying, and the like; very “homely” transgressions, if I

may so say. Yes, and if you pile enough of them upon the spark that is in your hearts you will smother it out. Sin, the wrenching of myself away from [the Holy Spirits] influences, not attending to [His] whispers and suggestions, being blind to the teaching of the Spirit through the Word and through Providence: these are the things that “grieve the Holy Spirit of God.”.....

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." A father feels a pang if he sees that his child makes no account of some precious gift that he has bestowed upon him, and leaves it lying about anywhere. A loving friend, standing on the margin of the stream and calling to his

friends in a boat when they are drifting to the rapids, turns away sad if they do not attend to his voice. That Divine Spirit pleads with us and proffers [His] gifts to us, and turns away . . . sick at heart, not because of wounded authority, but because of wounded love and baffled desire to help, when we, in spite of [Him], will take our own way, neglect the call that warns us of our peril, and leave untouched the gifts that would have made us safe. [Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture: Ephesians*, pp. 267-270.]

Many contend that, although believers may offend and grieve the Holy Spirit, He will never

abide in His love, even while He was bodily with the Father in Heaven:

I will not leave you helpless orphans. I am coming back to you. In just a little while the world will not see me anymore, but you will be seeing me. Because I am to live on, you too will live on. At that time you will know that I am in union with my Father and you are in union with me and I am in union with you. Whoever continues to hold and keep my commands is the one who really loves me, and whoever really loves me will be loved by my Father; yes, I will love him Myself and will make Myself real to him. ... If anyone really loves me, he will observe

my teaching, and my Father will love him, and both of us will come in face to face fellowship with him; yes, we will make our special dwelling- place with him. ... I have loved you just as the Father has loved me. You must remain in my love. If you continue to keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in His love (John 14:18-21, 23; 15:9,10 Williams).

Although He was to be absent from them bodily, He would still be with them spiritually. They could remain in His love, if they would, and know intimate fellowship with Him and with

His disciples for “all the days until the consummation of the age” (Matt. 28:20). Meyer affirms:

In the Paraclete . . . Christ Himself is present with His own (Matt, 28:20); for in the mission of the Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6), the self-communication of the exalted Christ takes place (Rom. 8:10; Gal. 2:20), without, however, the Paraclete ceasing to be an alios, another [subject than He, although dependent on the Son]. . .

[H. A. W. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Gospel of John, p. 415.]

Westcott comments:

Christ's historical Presence was only for a time. His spiritual Presence was “for all the days until the consummation of the age” (Matt, 28: 20). This Presence [is] fulfilled through the Spirit.

[B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John, p. 205.]

Christ's promise of the presence of the Holy Spirit to abide “forever” (*eis ton aionan*, unto the age) during His own bodily absence from the earth has been fulfilled thus far, and will continue to be fulfilled throughout all the days of the age, until Jesus comes again. But to assume that the promise of Jesus constitutes a pledge that

Paul warns the Romans that “to be carnally minded—death, but to be spiritually minded—life and peace” (8:6). “Brethren,” he writes, “we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God” (Rom. 8:12-14). Godet comments:

The life of the Spirit is not realized in the believer without his concurrence merely from the fact that the Spirit has once been communicated to him. There is needed on man's part

a persevering decision, an active docility in giving himself over to the guidance of the Spirit. For the guidance of the Spirit tends constantly to the sacrifice of the flesh; and if the believer refuses to follow it on this path, he renounces the life of the Spirit and its glorious privileges.

[F. L. Godet, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 307.]

The Blessed Spirit of God has come to abide forever and to guide the steps of pilgrims toward the Father's house and the everlasting inheritance of the faithful. But his gracious ministry cannot avail for men who despise His guidance and reproof, and who turn from

sowing to the Spirit to sow to the flesh. Such men cannot remain in Christ and His Spirit. The Holy Comforter cannot continue to dwell in men who close their hearts against His loving ministry.

Our blest Redeemer, ere He
breathed
His tender last farewell,
A Guide, a Comforter
bequeathed.
That He might with us dwell.

He came sweet influence to
impart,
A gracious, willing Guest,
When He can find an humble
heart
Where, welcome, He can rest.

And His that gentle voice we
hear.

Soft as the breath of even,
That checks each fault, that
calms our fear.

And speaks to us of Heaven.

Spirit of Purity and Grace,
Our weakness pitying see;
Still make our hearts Thy
dwelling-place.

And worthier of Thee.

Harriett Auber (adapted)

“Once for All”

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Chapter 9: ONCE FOR ALL

To His critics, Jesus once said, "You search the scriptures, for in them you think to have eternal life; and these are they which testify of me; and yet you will not come to me that you might have life" (John 5:39,40). With what diligence they pored over the Scriptures! Yet they failed to see Him who is the Alpha and Omega, the center and circumference of Holy Writ, and therefore failed to come to Him for life when He appeared visibly among them. Their study of the Scriptures, despite their zeal, was tragically impaired by preconception and prejudice. It is an unfortunate fact that many today, some of whom are

saving to the uttermost those who are ever drawing near to God through him, seeing that he is ever living to intercede for them." Maclaren writes:

In [Christ's] great offering, considered as including [His] life as well as His death . . . you have folded up in indissoluble unity the pattern, the motive, and the power for all righteousness of character; and he reaches the end for which God created him who, laying his hand on the head of that offering, not only transfers his sins to it, but receives its righteousness into him. By one offering that dealt with guilt and wiped it all out, and that deals with the tyranny of evil and

unto the consummation of
salvation.

O Thou eternal Victim, slain
A sacrifice for guilty man,
By the eternal Spirit made
An offering in the sinner's
stead;
Our everlasting Priest art thou.
Pleading thy death for sinners
now.

Thy offering still continues new;
Thy vesture keeps its crimson
hue;
Thou art the ever-slaughtered
Lamb,
Thy priesthood still remains the
same;
Thy years, O Lord, can never
fail;
Thy goodness is unchangeable.

O that my faith may never
move.

But stand unshaken as thy love!

Sure evidence of things
unseen,

Passing the years that
intervene.

Now let it view upon the tree

My Lord, who bleeds and dies
for me.

Charles Wesley

“Looking unto Jesus...

Chapter 10: AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER

"AND DEAR GOD, please bless Tippy, and help him not to make any sins." Thus did our three-year-old son, in his evening prayer, entreat for his puppy. It was a good prayer. "My dear children," wrote the aged John, "these things write I unto you that you sin not."

But Christians do sin. And the fact of our sin confronts us with two perils. First, we may deny that we sin. To do so is to deceive ourselves (I John 1:8) and to fail to confess our sins and to find forgiveness, cleansing, and continued fellowship with the God who is light, and in whom is no

remission of sins that have been committed up to the moment of salvation.

. . . the moment a person is born again, forgiveness has been provided for all the sins he ever has committed and for all the sins that he ever will commit in the course of his life.

[Donald Grey Barnhouse, Life by the Son, pp. 65, 67.]

But the truth of the matter is that long before “the moment a person is born again” complete forgiveness was provided— not only for *his* sins, “but for the sins of the whole world” (I John 2:2). There is nothing about a man’s experience of conversion which adds one iota to the provisions

“there is absolute safety and security for the Father's child even while he is sinning.” Quite to the contrary, they warn against the peril of presuming to continue in grace while consenting to deliberate sinning:

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. ... I warn you again, as I have also warned you in time past, that they who practice such things [the works of the flesh] shall not inherit the kingdom of God. . . . They that are Christ's crucify

[Estaurosan. a gnomic aorist expressing a general truth, and

the flesh with the affections and lusts. ... Be not deceived; God is not to be mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption [phthora, destruction, perishing]; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap [life everlasting, final and irrevocable], if we faint not (Gal. 5:16,17,21,24; 6:7-9).

For to be carnally minded-death; but to be spiritually minded-life and peace. . . . Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after

forbid. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? . . . Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. . . . For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. 8:6,12-14; 6:15,16,12,23).

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. . . . But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust,

Father who is, Himself, the propitiation for all our sins. We may confess our sins in full assurance that “He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” He has given His word. Let us trust Him.

**What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to Him in prayer!**

**Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every
weakness;
Take it to the Lord in prayer.**

**We are weak, and heavy-laden,
Bowed beneath the weight of**

**care—
Precious Savior, still our
Refuge,
Bear us up in holy prayer!
Joseph Scriven (adapted)**

“We have an Advocate”

Chapter 11: THE CHASTENING OF THE LORD

CHRISTIANS SIN. There is no need to labor the point. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" we insinuate that God is a liar, "and his word is not in us" (I John 1:8, 10). "In many things," writes James, "we all offend" (James 3:2).

But such is the love of the Father, He loves all His stumbling, erring children. With tender compassion beyond that of earthly fathers, He watches patiently to see whether His erring children judge themselves for their sins. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" of the

them, then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him and bring him out unto the elders of his city and unto the gate of his place; and they shall say unto the elders of his city. This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shall thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear (Deut. 21:18-21).

The stern Old Testament provision for the elimination of disobedient sons who refuse correction is applied by the writer to the Hebrews, not to the prospect of mere physical death,

conduct—demands which are optional only as sonship, itself, remains optional:

So you must keep on following God's example, as dearly loved children of His, and practice living in love, just as Christ loved you too and gave Himself for you as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But sexual vice and any form of immorality or sensual greed must not so much as be mentioned among you, as that is the only course becoming in God's people; there must be no indecency, silly talk or suggestive jesting, for they are unbecoming. There should be thanksgiving instead. For you may be absolutely sure that no one who is sexually

chastisement which He sends on him, he is judged; and if he does not profit by this means, nothing remains for him but to suffer in common with the world the final judgment from which God sought to preserve him, to be condemned.

[F. L. Godet, Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Vol. II, p. 169, italics his.]

Similarly, Westcott comments on Hebrews 12:7: “The divine purpose is unquestionable, but at the same time the efficacy of the discipline depends on the spirit with which it is received. Patient endurance alone converts suffering into a beneficent lesson.”

keep not my commandments;
then will I visit their
transgression with the rod, and
their iniquity with stripes.
Nevertheless, my
loving-kindness will I not utterly
take from him, nor suffer my
faithfulness to fail." (Ps.
139:31-34).

[Calvin, Institutes. 3:4:32.]

Calvin errs, first, in his appraisal of God's covenant with David; for he assumes that it involved all his descendants equally with David himself. But this is not so. God's covenant was with *David*, not his descendants; and, with the exception of one particular Person (the promised Seed), David's descendants were involved only incidentally. It

my commandments” (vv. 30,31).

Delitzsch comments:

. . . the faithlessness of David’s line in relation to the covenant shall not interfere with (annul) the faithfulness of God—a thought with which one might very naturally console one’s self in the reign of Rehoboam. Because God has placed the house of David in a filial relationship to Himself, He will chastise the apostate members as a father chastises his son. . .

. But even if, as history shows, this means of chastisement should be ineffectual in the case of individuals, the house of David as such will nevertheless remain ever in a state of favour with Him. . . .

God asserts that He will not disappoint David in reference to this one thing, viz. the perpetuity of his throne.

[Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. III, p. 40f]

The certainty of the fulfillment of God's covenant with David concerning the perpetuity of his throne could neither affect, nor be affected by, the outcome of God's dealings with David's "children" who forsook Him, some of whom submitted to His correction, and others of whom hardened their hearts against His chastening and suffered ultimate condemnation, according to the record of the

"If We Deny Him"

The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

* * *

Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. . . . Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny

Chapter 12: IF WE DENY HIM

WHAT DOES A MAN write who, facing the prospect of imminent death, sits down to write to a dear friend? It depends, of course, on many things. But perhaps on nothing so much as whom he knows. "I know whom I have believed," wrote Paul to Timothy, "and am fully persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12).

Paul was supremely confident. "The time of my departure is at hand [and] I am now ready to be offered up. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for

not of God” (John 8:43-47. Cf. 5:46,47; 18:37d). Westcott comments on John 7:17:

If any man will do . . . i.e., if it be any man's will to do His will. The force of the argument lies in the moral harmony of the man's purpose with the divine law so far as this law is known or felt. If there be no sympathy there can be no understanding. Religion is a matter of life and not of thought only. The principle is universal in its application. The Will of God is not to be limited to the Old Testament revelation, or to the claims of Christ, but includes every manifestation of the purpose of God.

who obviously are true believers. Consider the following passages:

Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many ...And many false prophets shall arise, and deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved (Matt. 24:4,5,11-13).

(Some have interpreted v. 13 to mean only that he who survives the tribulation will be saved *physically* by the appearing of the Lord. Such interpretation completely ignores the context

souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God (Acts 14:21, 22).

(Robertson comments: "Paul frankly warned these new converts in this heathen environment of the many tribulations through which they must enter the Kingdom of God (the culmination at last). . . . These saints were already converted. . . . These recent converts from heathenism were ill-informed, were persecuted, had broken family and social ties, greatly needed encouragement if they were to hold out." [A. T. Robertson,

The subject in both clauses is the same-the just man, the man who is justified by his faith; and the sense in which *hupostellesthai* is here used is that of not keeping faith, wavering in faith, forsaking the path of faith and the community of the faithful. The just man, the man accepted before God, lives by faith; but if he loses his faith, and faithlessly draws back from the right path, his acceptance is forfeited. That such apostasy is possible even for those who have been truly justified, i.e., for Christians who have had more than a superficial experience of divine grace, is one of the main points of instruction in this epistle. To

teach this lesson, the clauses of the prophetic utterance are inverted. The second, as it stands here, is a warning as from the mouth of God Himself, a warning in a high prophetic tone. But the writer, as twice before, resumes the language of comfort and encouragement after words of the saddest foreboding. He proceeds, with pastoral gentleness and wisdom, to encourage the fainthearted and establish their wavering by rousing their Christian confidence, and associating himself with them as exposed to the same dangers, and courageously defying them.

Ver. 39. But we are not of backsliding to perdition, but of

faith to the gaining of the soul . . .
. The persons meant are not Christians in general, but the writer of the epistle and his readers. Our way, he says, is not that cowardly shrinking back from Christian faith and confession which the God of prophecy has denounced as so infinitely hateful to Himself, and which leads to destruction [apoleia, antithesis of zoe and soteria), but a steadfast, abiding faith and reliance . . . which bases itself on the zesetai of the prophetic promise—has for its end the salvation of the soul. . . . The man who keeps his faith unto the end, he saves his soul, wins her back from the pit of destruction which threatened

to devour her, and so may be said to gain and possess her for the first time as now truly his. [Cf. Jesus' words to His disciples, "In your patience, possess (kiaomai, gain, win) ye your souls" Luke 21:19.]

[Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 201 f.]

Other passages could be cited. But the above passages establish the fact that the warnings in the Scriptures against succumbing to the peril of apostasy are addressed, not to men who have not as yet believed and who have nothing from which to apostatize, but to men who definitely possess saving faith and are in the state of grace.

would do the Scriptures a great injury, and would cast the Church into the error of carelessness and sloth.

The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints can never become an a priori guarantee in the life of believers which would enable them to get along without admonitions and warnings.

[Despite Berkouwer's protest, this is precisely what Calvin's doctrine of perseverance inevitably becomes for everyone who embraces it.]

Because of the nature of the relation between faith and perseverance, the whole gospel must abound with admonition. It has to speak thus, because perseverance is not something

that is merely handed down to us, but it is something that comes to realization only in the path of faith. Therefore the most earnest and alarming admonitions cannot in themselves be taken as evidence against the doctrine of perseverance.

To think of admonition and perseverance as opposites, as contradictories, is possible only if we misunderstand the nature of perseverance and treat it in isolation from its correlation with faith. For the correct understanding of the correlation between faith and perseverance, it is precisely these admonitions that are significant, and they enable us to understand better the nature

perseverance as a gift, about the gracious character of God's covenant in its manifold riches, and about the power of Christ's intercession, these are indissolubly connected with a constancy in the lives of the believers themselves. . . . [The possibility of] total falling, therefore, has had to be rejected.....

[The doctrine of perseverance is a proper] subject for preaching. For this preaching ... is a great and moving experience for the believer, one which constrains him to marvel about the constancy which is his in Christ. This marveling will always be the deepest foundation for the thankfulness which fills the believer's life as

believer. It occurs on almost every page of Holy Scripture. But to think that this element of contingency expresses the entire gospel teaching regarding perseverance is to ignore completely the Scriptural teaching that faith always rests in the steadfastness and faithfulness of God's grace. This everpresent grace is never spoken of in a simplistic fashion, as if it were something that could be taken for granted. However, the faith to which we are incessantly called opens up to our view a marvelous continuity.

[Ibid., p. 199.]

But just how it is possible to

inevitably prove faithful. He asserts that, in our consideration of perseverance and continuity, we must

. . . start with the doctrine of the faithfulness of God's grace, which is certainly of most decisive importance for the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. In this doctrine, there is great emphasis on the immutability of God's counsel in Jesus Christ. [The real root of confusion for Calvinists is their failure to recognize that the certainty of election and perseverance is with respect, not to particular individual men unconditionally, but rather with respect to the ekklesia, the corporate body of all who,

through living faith, are in union with Christ, the true Elect and the Living Covenant between God and all who trust in Him. See Appendix E, Section 10.] God's grace is affirmed as the reality of preservation. It would not be incorrect to say that faith affirms perseverance, the constancy of God's grace, the permanency of His faithfulness and of His eternal love.

.....
His faithfulness does not depend on our faithfulness, nor on anything that is or will be present in us. There is rather a "nevertheless," an "in spite of."

.....
It is clear that one need add nothing to this faithfulness and constancy. The greatness of

Chapter 13: SIN SHALL NOT HAVE DOMINION

THERE ARE but two possible reasons why any man on earth is unsaved. Either he has not heard the Gospel, or he is unwilling to accept the condition of repentance and discipleship whereby the Gospel of Christ may become for him, personally, "the power of God unto salvation."

Jesus commissioned His disciples to preach "repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations" (Luke 24:47). There can be no remission without repentance. Paul testified "both to the Jews and also to the Greeks repentance toward God and

original term properly denotes mourning for the dead, and here signifies grief for those who will suffer the chastisement which he declares (8:2) that he will inflict. As they belonged to the same class with the notable offender of I Cor. 5., it may be inferred that he contemplates passing the same sentence of excommunication upon them that he did upon him, and so should have to sorrow over them as severed and, for a while at least, dead members of the visible Church.

[Joseph Waite, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (The Bible Commentary, ed. F. C. Cook), Vol. III, p. 474. We would

wrong master and living after the flesh is spiritual death. Again, let us observe that the warning is directed, not to outsiders, but to believers. Godet comments:

The life of the Spirit is not realized in the believer without his concurrence merely from the fact that the Spirit has once been communicated to him. There is needed on man's part a persevering decision, an active docility in giving himself over to the guidance of the Spirit. For the guidance of the Spirit tends constantly to the sacrifice of the flesh; and if the believer refuses to follow it on this path, he renounces the life of the Spirit and its glorious

which even the pardoned one succumbs. . . . No one can discern his faults, on account of the heart of man being unfathomable and on account of the disguise, oftentimes so plausible, and the subtlety of sin. Hence, as an inference, follows the prayer: pronounce me free also [of] all those sins which even he who is most earnestly striving after sanctification does not discern, although he may desire to know them, by reason of the ever limited nature of his knowledge both of himself and of sin. . . . The prayer for justification is followed in ver. 13 by the prayer for sanctification, and indeed for preservation against deliberate sins. . . .

Presumptuous sins, when they are repeated, become dominant sins which irresistibly enslave the man . . . hence the last member of the climax (which advances from the peccatum involuntarium to the procereticum, and from this to the regnans): let them not have dominion over me. . . . Then, when Thou bestowest this twofold favour upon me, the favour of pardon and the grace of preservation, shall I be blameless . . . from great transgression.

[Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms*, Vol. I, p. 288 f.]

According to Delitzsch, the Hebrew word rendered *great*

frequently and urgently. Millions of “Christians,” satisfied with their “Christian experience” (all in the past) and complacent in their indifference toward Christ and His Church, are in desperate need of examining themselves to see whether they are in the faith (II Cor. 13:5). The love of the world is the path of compromise. It ends in disaster.

Kierkegaard, the great theologian, told the "Parable of the Wild Duck" which flew in the springtime northward across Europe. On his flight he happened to come down in a barnyard in Denmark where there were some tame ducks. The wild duck ate and enjoyed

some of their com and remained for a while. At first he decided to stay only one hour, then for one day. Then he remained a week, and then a month; and because he liked the good food and the safety of the barnyard he stayed all summer.

One autumn day when his wild mates were winging their way southward again, they passed over the barnyard where he was. He heard their cries and was so stirred by the old thrill of joy and delight that he flapped his wings and rose to join his mates in their flight. But he had become so soft and so heavy that he could not rise above the top of the barn. He

sank back again to the barnyard and consoled himself with the thought, "Oh well, my life is safe here, and the food is good."

Every spring and every autumn when the wild ducks flew over his barnyard, he heard their cries. His eyes would gleam for a moment, and he would begin to lift his wings to join his mates. But the day came when the wild ducks flew over him and uttered their cries and he paid not the slightest attention. The compromise was complete.

[The Intermediate Leader, Volume 40, Number 2 (Second Quarter, 1957), p. 41. Published

any of [us] an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (*Heb. 3:1,13,12*). Let us steel our hearts against the siren song of Vanity Fair, lest the voice of our Savior and the call of His Spirit be lost to our hearing.

**If I gained the world, but lost
the Savior,
Were my life worth living for a
day?
Could my yearning heart find
rest and comfort
In the things that soon must
pass away?**

**If I gained the world, but lost
the Savior,
Would my gain be worth the
lifelong strife?**

Are all earthly pleasures worth
comparing
For a moment with a
Christ-filled life?

Had I wealth and love in fullest
measure,
And a name revered both far
and near.
Yet no hope beyond, no harbor
waiting.
Where my storm-tossed vessel I
could steer;

If I gained the world, but lost
the Savior,
Who endured the cross and
died for me.
Could then all the world afford
a refuge
Whither, in my anguish, I might
flee?

O what emptiness!—without
the Savior
'Mid the sins and sorrows here
below!
And eternity, how dark without
Him!—
Only night and tears and
endless woe!

What, though I might live
without the Savior,
When I come to die, how would
it be?
O to face the valley's gloom
without Him!
And without Him all eternity!
Anna Olander

"More Than Conquerors"

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS 8:35, 37-39

Chapter 14: MORE THAN CONQUERORS

“AM I A SOLDIER of the cross, a follower of the Lamb?” asks Isaac Watts in his inspiring hymn. No one is a follower of the Lamb who is not a soldier of the cross. “My son, be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus,” wrote the veteran warrior Paul to young Timothy. “Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. . . . Fight the good fight of faith, get a grip

[A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol. IV, p. 594.]

on eternal life.”

Paul wrote, not as an “armchair

countenance to that theory of the Final Perseverance of the Saints which makes their salvation independent of responsibility and free-will. That forfeiture of Grace which God the Father and our Lord never will, and which no external power or circumstance ever can effect, may be brought about by the free-will of the Christian himself.

[H. P. Liddon, Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, p. 146]

Similar is the comment of Godet:

It is a fact of the moral life which is in question, and in this life liberty has always its part to play . . . from the first moment

of faith. What Paul means is that nothing will tear us from the arms of Christ against our will, and so long as we shall not refuse to abide in them ourselves.

[F. L. Godet, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 333.]

We have before alluded to Hengstenberg's remark on John 10:28,29:

It is a cold consolation to say. "If and so long as they remain my sheep they are secure and shall never perish." The whole strength of our soul's desire is for a guarantee against ourselves! That there is such a guarantee is (here) assured. . . .

well said that our freedom in Christ brings with it

. . . the necessity for continual warfare against all that would limit and restrain it—namely, the passions and desires and inclinations of our baser or nobler, but godless, self. These are, as it were, deposed by the entrance of the new life. But it is a dangerous thing to keep dethroned and discrowned tyrants alive, and the best thing is to behead them, as well as to cast them from their throne. ‘If ye, through the Spirit, do put to death the deeds (and inclinations and wills) of the flesh, ye shall live’; and if you do not, they will live and will kill you. So the freedom of the new

life is a militant freedom, and we have to fight to maintain it. As Burke said about the political realm, 'the price of liberty is eternal vigilance,' so we say about the new life of the Christian man—he is free only on condition that he keeps well under the hatches the old tyrants, who are ever plotting and struggling to have dominion once again.

[Alexander Maclaren,
*Expositions of Holy Scripture:
St. John, Vol. I, p. 157f.*]

The eighth chapter of Romans, as someone has said, "begins with no condemnation and ends with no separation." It is well to observe, however, that it is punctuated with sharp

make the Sonship of Christ and our sonship to stand on the same plane and to be of the same nature. We are but the adopted children, altho we have another descent, while He is the actual and eternal Son. While He is essentially the eternal Son, partaker of the divine nature which in the unity of His Person He unites with the human nature, we are merely restored to the likeness of the divine nature which we had lost by sin. Hence as "to be adopted as a child" and "to be the Son forever" are contrasts, so are also the following: "to have the divine nature in Himself" and "to be only partakers of the divine nature."..... . . . accepting

the field of battle is within ourselves. It is there that the conflict is won or lost—a conflict in which every believer must continue to engage throughout his earthly pilgrimage if he is to reign with Christ (II Tim. 2:12). In His messages to the churches (Rev. 2 and 3), our risen Lord offers to all His followers, in their day of conflict, blessed incentives and encouragements to “keep on gloriously conquering through Him who loved us”:

To him that overcome will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. ... Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the

crown of life. . . He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.... To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, [Used In courts of justice, black pebbles for condemning, white pebbles for acquitting." —A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol. VI, p. 307.] and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. . . . That which ye have already hold fast till I come. He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they

be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father (cf. Psalm 2:7-9). And I will give him the morning star. . . . Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that over- cometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. . . . Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down

And in what strength [are we to conquer]? The apostle, instead of saying: through the love of the Lord, expresses himself thus: through the Lord that loved us. It is His living person that acts in us. For it is He, Himself, in His love who sustains us. This love is not a simple thought of our mind; it is a force emanating from Him.
[Godet, *op. cit.*, p. 333.]

“Without me,” said Jesus, “ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). But “I can do all things,” wrote Paul, “through Christ who strengthens [empowers] me” (Phil. 4:13). “Christ liveth in me,” he wrote, “and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God

ourselves throw Him away. 'In this thou shall conquer.' 'They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of His testimony.'

[Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of Holy Scripture: Romans, p. 208.]

**He that overcometh in the fight
Shall be clothed in raiment
white and pure;
In the ever-blessed book of life
Shall his name eternally
endure.**

**When my Father on His dazzling
throne
Sits, with myriad angels all
around.**

**I'll confess His name, to men
unknown;
Heaven and earth shall listen to**

the sound.

Who, with such a glorious end
in view.

Would not in the heavenly
conflict join?

Strange that willing soldiers are
so few.

Strange so many faint, who
once were Thine.

Oh, it is a service blest indeed!

Though the strife be long, the
end is sure;

And our Leader gives to all who
need,

Grace that they may to the end
endure.

'Neath Thy standard be my
place, O Lord:

Grant me strength and grace,

that I ere long
May obtain that rich and full
reward.
Then, as conquering I sheath
my sword.
Thou, my Captain, shall be all
my song.

Frances Ridley Havergal.

"The Race Set Before Us"

And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

* * *

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if he draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

* * *

For by faith the elders obtained a

that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

* * *

Let us keep on going forth therefore unto him outside the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no enduring city, but we seek one to come.

FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE
HEBREWS

Chapter 15: THE RACE SET BEFORE US

WHO WROTE THE Epistle to the Hebrews? When? Where? What was the original title? To whom was it sent? How did it become the common property of the Church? Many questions

decline, may be hardly perceptible in many instances; nevertheless, it remains true that a Christian either grows or degenerates. The Christian life is never static. The congregation to whom the Epistle to the Hebrews was written had not merely failed to grow in their Christian lives; they had *degenerated* to the point of becoming spiritual infants again (5:11,12).

They had become with the years less quick in understanding, and not more quick according to a natural and healthy development. . . . The Hebrews had through their own neglect become young children again. ... As yet

faith.” To Him our eyes are to be turned while we look away from every rival attraction. From Him we learn Faith. The “faith” of which the Apostle speaks is faith in its absolute type, of which he has traced the action under the Old Covenant. The particular interpretations, by which it is referred to the faith of each individual Christian as finding its beginning and final development in Christ, or to the substance of the Christian creed, are foreign to the whole scope of the passage, which is to show that in Jesus Christ Himself we have the perfect example-perfect in realization and in effect-of that faith which we are to imitate, trusting in

Him. He too looked through the present and the visible to the future and the unseen. In His human Nature He exhibited Faith in its highest form, from first to last, and placing Himself as it were at the head of the great army of heroes of Faith, He carried faith ... to its most complete perfection and to its loftiest triumph. This ascription of “faith” to the Lord is of the highest importance for the realization of His perfect humanity. Comp. c. v. 8; ii. 13; iii. 2; John v. 19; xi. 41.

[Ibid., p. 395.]

In His birth as Jesus, Son of Mary, the eternal Word humbled Himself to be made what He had not been before,

"The Deceitfulness of Sin"

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus . . . Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Wherefore . . . take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made companions of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

HEBREWS 3:1,6,12-14

Chapter 16: THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN

IT HAS BEEN SAID that a large segment of the church today has great zeal for the new birth, but little concern for the newborn. Not so the Apostles in the first generation of the church. Prominent in the epistles of the New Testament is the note of intense concern, not only for the growth and maturity, but for the spiritual safety—the very survival—of the saints in all the various churches.

“I feel a divine jealousy for you,” writes Paul to the believers at Corinth, “as I betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure bride to her one husband. But I am

Speculations on the nature of intermediate spiritual agencies—their names, their ranks, their offices—were rife in the schools of Judaeo-Gnostic thought. 'Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers'—these formed part of the spiritual nomenclature which they had invented to describe different grades of angelic mediators. Without entering into these speculations, the Apostle asserts that Christ is Lord of all, the highest and the lowest, whatever rank they may hold and by whatever name they are called, for they are parts of creation and He is the source of creation. Through Him they

became, and unto Him they tend.

Hence the worship of angels, which the false teachers inculcated, was utterly wrong in principle. The motive of this angelolatry it is not difficult to imagine. There was a show of humility, for there was a confession of feasible to grasp at the lower links of the chain which bound earth to heaven, when heaven itself seemed far beyond the reach of man. The successive grades of intermediate beings were as successive steps, by which fully woven web of sophistry the Apostle tears to shreds. The doctrine of the false teachers was based on confident assumptions respecting angelic

beings of whom they could know nothing. It was moreover a denial of Christ's twofold personality and His mediatorial office. It follows from the true conception of Christ's Person that He, and He alone, can bridge over the chasm between earth and heaven; for He is at once the lowest and the highest. He raises up man to God, for He brings down God to man. Thus the chain is reduced to a single link, this link being the Word made flesh. As the pleroma resides in Him, so is it communicated to us through Him. To substitute allegiance to any other spiritual mediator is to sever the connexion of the limbs with the Head, which is the centre of life and the

practice are so far removed from the cardinal truth so beautifully stated in Monsignor Knox's translation. Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse relates an interesting experience:

Some years ago I was living in one of the Alpine valleys of Southern France, preaching to one of the little Huguenot congregations while I was pursuing my studies at the University of Grenoble. Every Thursday morning I walked four miles up the valley to a little centre where I instructed a score of children in the things of God. In that village there lived a Roman priest who on Thursday used to come down the valley to a village near the

one where I lived. Frequently our paths crossed, and at times we found ourselves going the same direction. One day as we went along together he said to me, "Why do you Protestants object so strongly to our praying to the saints?" I asked him to explain what advantage there was to be gained from praying to the saints. He replied, "Well, suppose, for example, that I wanted an interview with the President of the Republic, Monsieur Poincare. I could go to Paris and arrange for an interview with any one of the members of the cabinet. I could go to the Minister of Agriculture, or to the Minister for the Colonies, or to the Office of the Interior, the

Navy, National Defense, or any other of the ministries. They would facilitate my obtaining an interview with the President. In the same way I may obtain the intercession of the Virgin and the saints on behalf of my desires as I pray.” He looked rather triumphant as he completed his illustration. Then I said to him, “Monsieur le Cure, let me ask you a question. Suppose that my name is Poincare, and that my father is the President of the French Republic. Suppose that I live in the Palace of the Elysee with him, sit at his table three times a day, and am frequently the object of his tender solicitations, and know the touch of his loving hand. Do you

think for a moment that if I have a problem to present to him I am going to go across Paris to one of the ministries, pass all the guards and secretaries that surround a cabinet member, and finally reaching his office, say, ‘Monsieur le Ministre, would you be so kind as to arrange an interview for me to talk with my daddy? Do you not rather think that I will look him in the eye at one of the moments when he puts his arm across my shoulder in a gesture of affection, and then tell him that I have a request to make?’” The Cure was taken aback. He looked at me and his mouth opened and closed and opened again as though he were seeking for words that

would not come. Then I took my little French Testament from my pocket and turned to two or three passages of Scripture and had him read them aloud. To “as many as received Him (Christ), to them gave He the authority to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name” (John i. 12). “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. v. 1,2). “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our

profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, apart from sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:14-16).

He had me write down the references that he might look them up in what he called a Catholic Bible, and frequently thereafter he stopped me with questions, coming as a learner to discover some of the wonders that are ours in Christ.

[Donald Grey Barnhouse, Life by the Son, pp. 43-48. Used by permission of The Evangelical Foundation, Inc., Philadelphia,

was on my way to Macedonia, I still beg you to stay on in Ephesus to warn certain teachers to stop devoting themselves to myths and never-ending pedigrees, for such things lead to controversies rather than stimulate our trusteeship to God through faith. But the aim of your instruction is to be love that flows out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. Some people have stepped aside from these things and turned to fruitless talking. They want to be teachers of the law, although they do not understand the words they use or the things about which they make such confident assertions.....

. . . continue to fight the good fight, by keeping your hold on faith and a good conscience; for some have thrust the latter aside and so have made shipwreck of their faith.....

Now the Spirit distinctly declares that in later times some will turn away from the faith, because they continuously give their attention to deceiving spirits and the things that demons teach through the pretensions of false teachers, men with seared consciences, who forbid people to marry and teach them to abstain from certain sorts of food which God created for the grateful enjoyment of those who have faith and a clear knowledge of the truth.

For everything in God's creation is good, and nothing to be refused, provided it is accepted with thanksgiving, for in this way it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

If you continue to put these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, ever feeding your own soul on the truths of the faith and of the fine teaching which you have followed.....

Make it your habit to pay close attention to yourself and your teaching. Persevere in these things, for if you do you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.....

Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you; continue to turn away from the worldly,

Father but through me.”

There is a green hill far away.
Without a city wall.
Where the dear Lord was
crucified,
Who died to save us all.

He died that we might be
forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to
heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.

There was no other good
enough
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven and let us in.

Oh, dearly, dearly, has He
loved.

And we must love Him, too;
And trust in His redeeming
blood,
And try His works to do.

Cecil F. Alexander

It is essential that we “try His works to do;” for any “believing” which does not lead to *doing* is completely insincere. But our faith must never rest in all our *doing*. All our trust and hope must be “in His redeeming blood” — in Christ alone, and not in other things to even the smallest degree, no matter how good and right they may be, of themselves. One dare not trust Christ — and baptism; or Christ — and church

by faith” (3:4,7-9).

**My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and
righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest
frame.
But wholly lean on Jesus’
Name.**

Edward Mote

One of the false “sweet frames” on which multitudes of sincere people rest their hope for eternity is the erroneous doctrine of unconditional security. Many who deplore the fact that some trust in church membership, baptism, decent living, and other false frames yet rest all their hope for salvation on a false frame just as deadly.

the assumed validity of a popular, but erroneous, doctrine.

Aware of the exceeding “deceitfulness of sin” and knowing its diabolical power to cheat us, let us refuse all sweet frames of hope, save Jesus Christ Himself. Trusting only in Him, let us “hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end” (Heb. 3:14) that we may be “partakers of Christ” — His fellows and companions, by His grace, in God’s endless perfect day.

**When He shall come with
trumpet sound,
Oh, may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness**

alone.
Faultless to stand before the
throne.

On Christ, the solid Rock, I
stand;
All other ground is sinking
sand.

Edward Mote

Chapter 17: KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD

"I'D LIKE TO BE a Christian. But what's the use? I know I couldn't last." How often do we hear such statements! Many, acutely aware of the weakness of the flesh, honestly fear that perseverance in the Christian life is beyond their poor powers. And indeed it is. But there is a sublime truth which many fail to recognize: Christ does not ask us to "go it alone" as His followers. He has promised to be with His own all the days, even to the end of the age. Surrounding and sustaining all who follow Him in obedient faith is His infinite grace and all the power of Almighty God!

Bishop Moule

"Able to keep." I know well how liable is this blissful truth, like every other, to distortions and misuse. It is possible so to state it, or rather so to ignore other truth beside it, as almost to deny our immortal personality, or our present responsibility.

[H. C. C. Moule. Thoughts on Christian Sanctity, p. 68.]

Paul did not lose sight of "our present responsibility" in his consideration of the preserving grace of God at work in our behalf to bring us to the everlasting enjoyment of the Father's presence. Writing to the Colossians of God's purpose to

present holy and unblemished and unreprieveable in His presence those whom He has reconciled to Himself through the death of His Son, Paul is faithful to warn the Colossians that God's purpose can finally be realized in them only "if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled [steadfast], and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (1:23). Bishop Moule comments:

But that prospect is only yours if, an emphatic "if" (eige), you are abiding by your (tei) faith, holding fast to that great secret, simplest reliance on the all-sufficient Savior, and on no substitute for Him; founded as on the Rock, and steady in the

resolve to rest there forever; and not yielding to movements (metakinoumenoi, a present participle, indicating a chronic liability to disturbance) away from the hope (the blessed hope of the Lords Return for the final salvation of His waiting and faithful ones), the hope of the Gospel which you heard when you were first evangelized.

[Moule, Colossian Studies, p. 97 f., italics his.]

Paul's confidence that "the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom" was the confidence of one who could say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course,

I have kept the faith” (II Tim. 4:7) and who, in his letter, faithfully exhorts the pastor of the church at Ephesus “to continue thou in the things which thou hast learned ... the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (3:14,15).

While the short Epistle of Jude begins and ends on a sublime note of the keeping power of God, in between are numerous sharp warnings of the peril and tragedy of apostasy. In his brief summary of the Epistle of Jude, A. T. Pierson writes:

**It is a warning against apostasy.
Faith makes faithful saints who,**

contending for the faith and preserving, are preserved by Grace and presented in Glory. The contrast is marked between those who kept not their first estate and are kept for judgment, and those who keep themselves and are kept from falling. Apostasy is presented in representative examples: Antinomians, who turn gracious liberty into lascivious license; unbelieving Israel in the Exodus; disobedient angels; lustful Sodomites; self-righteous Cain; greedy Balaam; presumptuous Korah; and blasphemous mockers. All of us are either reserved for the Day of Condemnation, or preserved for the Day of Presentation. If

"That You May Know that You Have Eternal Life"

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.

I JOHN 5:11-13

Chapter 18: THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE

SOMETIME AGO, a successful businessman of Kansas City, an earnest Christian, was greeted by his banker with the question, "What do you know for sure, Pete?" He immediately replied, "I know the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses me from all sin. I'm a child of God by faith, and I'm on my way to heaven." Surprised and impressed by the unexpected answer, the banker exclaimed, "Wait a minute! Come into my office; I want to talk with you." My friend had the privilege of talking at length concerning the surpassing grace

mercy. [Footnote: The French adds, 'Comme par une bouffée' —as by fits and starts.]
In the elect alone

he implants the living root of faith so that they persevere even to the end. Thus we dispose of the objection that if God truly displays his grace, it must endure forever. There is nothing inconsistent in this with the fact of his enlightening some with a present sense of grace, which afterwards proves evanescent.

Although faith is a knowledge of the divine favour towards us and a full persuasion of its truth, it is not strange that the sense of the divine love, which though akin to faith differs

much from it, vanishes in those who are temporarily impressed. The will of God is, I confess, immutable, and his truth is always consistent with itself; but I deny that the reprobate ever advance so far as to penetrate to that secret revelation which Scripture reserves for the elect only. I therefore deny that they either understand his will considered as immutable, or steadily embrace his truth, inasmuch as they rest satisfied with an evanescent impression; just as a tree not planted deep enough may take root, but will in process of time wither away, though it may for several years not only put forth leaves and flowers, but produce fruit. In

short, as by the revolt of the first man the image of God could be effaced from his mind and soul, so there is nothing strange in His shedding some rays of grace on the reprobate, and afterwards allowing these to be extinguished.

[Calvin considered reprobation a positive decree. For a brief discussion of Calvin's view of reprobation and of his erroneous fundamental assumption, see Appendix D.]

'This was Calvin's explanation of the fact that many fall from grace, a fact which he acknowledged. His theology required him to assume that those who fall from grace do so by the express design of God. They believe for a while, only to

faith.....

Faith and patience, &c. What is meant is a firm faith which has patience as its companion. For faith is what is chiefly required; but as many who make at first a marvelous display of faith soon fail, he shows that the true evidence of that faith which is not fleeting and evanescent is endurance.....

13. For when God made a promise to Abraham, &c. His object was to prove that the grace of God is offered to us in vain, except we receive the promise by faith and constantly cherish it in the bosom of our heart. [Calvin, Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 146 f.]

Again, commenting on Hebrews 3:6-14, Calvin writes:

. . . the author of this epistle exhorts the Jews-who had already made a profession of Christ to persevere in the faith, that they might be deemed as being in God's household. He had said before that God's house was subject to the authority of Christ. Suitably to this declaration is added the admonition that they would then have a place in God's family when they obeyed Christ. But as they had already embraced the Gospel, he mentions their condition if they persevered in the faith.....

This passage reminds us that we are always to make

progress even unto death; for our whole life is as it were a race.....

12. Take heed, (or, See) brethren, lest there be at any time in any of you a wicked heart of unbelief, &c. I have preferred to retain literally what the Apostle states, rather than to give a paraphrase as to the wicked or depraved heart of unbelief, by which he intimates that unbelief would be connected with depravity or wickedness, if after having received the knowledge of Christ they departed from his faith. For he addressed them who had been imbued with the elements of Christianity; hence he immediately added, By departing; for the sin of

defection is accompanied with perfidy.

13. He also pointed out the remedy, so that they might not fall into this wickedness, and that was, to exhort one another. For as by nature we are inclined to evil, we have need of various helps to retain us in the fear of God. Unless our faith be now and then raised up, it will lie prostrate; unless it be warmed, it will be frozen; unless it be roused, it will grow torpid. He would have us then to stimulate one another by mutual exhortations, so that Satan may not creep into our hearts and by his fallacies draw us away from God. And this is a way of speaking that ought to be especially observed; for we fall

not immediately by the first assault into this madness of striving against God; but Satan by degrees accosts us artfully by indirect means, until he holds us ensnared in his delusions. Then indeed being blinded, we break forth into open rebellion.

We must then meet this danger in due time, and it is one that is nigh us all, for nothing is more possible than to be deceived; and from this deception comes at length hardness of heart. We hence see how necessary it is for us to be roused by the incessant goads of exhortations. Nor does the Apostle give only a general precept, that all should take heed to themselves; but he

would have them also to be solicitous for the salvation of every member, so that they should not suffer any of those who had been once called to perish through their neglect. And he who feels it his duty so to watch over the salvation of the whole flock as to neglect no one sheep performs in this case the office of a good shepherd.....

14. For we are made partakers, &c. He commends them for having begun well; but lest, under the pretext of the grace which they had obtained, they should indulge themselves in carnal security, he says that there was need of perseverance; for many having only tasted the Gospel do not

think of any progress, as though they had reached the summit. Thus it is that they not only stop in the middle of their race, yea, nigh the starting-posts, but turn another way. Plausible indeed is this objection, "What can we wish more after having found Christ?" But if he is possessed by faith, we must persevere in it, so that he may be our perpetual possession. Christ, then, has given himself to be enjoyed by us on this condition, that by the same faith by which we have been admitted into a participation of him, we are to preserve so great a blessing even to death.

[Ibid., pp. 81-90. The entire portion is excellent, but most of

embraced the Gospel and did profess it, to go forward by exhorting them; for we are far from being so ready and stout as we ought. Therefore our laziness needeth pricks, and our coldness must be warmed. But because God will have his exercised with divers combats, Paul and Barnabas admonish the disciples to be ready to suffer tribulation. A very necessary admonition, that we must go on warfare in this world, that we may live well and godly. If the flesh should not molest us, if Satan should attempt nothing, if the wicked should not trouble us with some stumblingblocks, it were no such troublesome thing to persevere; because that were a

sweet walk through a soft and pleasant way; but because there arise on every side, and every minute of an hour, infinite assaults which provoke us to fall away, there ariseth the hardness; and therefore it is that the virtue of constancy is so rare. Therefore, to the end we may persist even unto the end, we must be prepared for war.....

But this is the best comfort, and which is sufficient enough to confirm their minds, that this way (though it be hard and sharp) leadeth unto the kingdom of heaven.

[Calvin, Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, Vol. II, p. 24 f.]

perennial source of consolation, it is not inconsistent with exhortations to permanence of faith and warnings of the sad results of deviation and apostasy. He who stops short in the race, and does not reach the goal, cannot obtain the prize. He who abandons the refuge into which he fled for a season is swept away when the hurricane breaks upon him. The loss of faith is the knell of hope.....

For man is not acted on mechanically by the grace of God, but his whole spiritual nature is excited to earnest prayer and anxious effort. His continuance in the faith is not the unconscious impress of an irresistible law, but the result of

a diligent use of every means by which belief may be fostered and deepened. . . . Thus, as rational beings are wrought upon by motives, so warnings and appeals are addressed to them, and these appliances form a special feature of God's plan of preserving them.

The apostle thus shows them how much is suspended on their perseverance.

[John Eadie, Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians, p. 85 f. It is odd that a Calvinist should speak of "how much is suspended on perseverance." For according to "tulip" theology's doctrine of unconditional election, nothing at all is suspended on perseverance. Quite to the contrary, perseverance is

doctrine of the perseverance of the saints and recognize that we may entertain the faith of our security in Christ only as we persevere in faith and holiness to the end. It was nothing less than the goal of the resurrection to life and glory that Paul had in mind when he wrote, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13,14).

The perseverance of the saints reminds us very forcefully that only those who persevere to the

end are truly saints. We do not attain to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus automatically. Perseverance means the engagement of our persons in the most intense and concentrated devotion to those means which God has ordained for the achievement of his saving purpose. The scriptural doctrine of are so prevalent in evangelical circles.

[John Murray,
Redemption-Accomplished and Applied, p. 193.]

These things being true, it is obviously an error of the gravest sort to assume that a past experience of conversion makes one unconditionally secure and constitutes a guarantee of final

There is no valid witness or assurance of salvation apart from obedient faith in Jesus Christ as Savior from sin. John, who cites numerous ways we may know we have eternal life as a present blessing, here and now, warns us of the necessity of continuing in faith, if we would continue to share the eternal life of God through Christ:

Whoever disowns the Son, the same has not the Father: but he who confesses the Son has the Father also. Let that therefore remain in you which you have heard from the beginning [the true Gospel, in contrast with the false doctrines of the "antichrists" who had "gone

out” from the company of the faithful, embracing Gnosticism, which denied essential aspects of the nature and Person of Jesus, with which they now were endeavoring to “seduce” those who still continued true to the authentic Gospel]. If that which you have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that he has promised us, the eternal life. . . . And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has the life; and he who has not the Son of God has not the life. These things have I written to you who believe on the name of the Son

of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. ... He who believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself.

(I John 2:23-25; 5:11-13,10).

Verily, verily, I say unto you. If a man keep my word, he shall never see death.

John 8:51

Chapter 19: IS APOSTASY WITHOUT REMEDY?

"I HAVE SINNED—I have betrayed innocent blood!" Such was the cry of wretched Judas in his bitter remorse. Did his anguished cry awaken concern and pity in the hearts of the priests, the official shepherds in Israel? "What is that to us?" was the scornful retort of his fellow-conspirators. "See thou to that."

Hurling into the holy place the coins which mocked his anguish, thirty silver coins for which he had sold Jesus—and his soul, Judas hurried from the temple to . . . where? He was a man without friend, without priest, without God, without

was minded to slay them” (I Sam. 2:25 ASV). Lange comments:

They were in a state of inner hardening which excluded the subjective condition of salvation from destruction, and so they had already incurred God’s unchangeable condemnation. As hardened offenders, they were already appointed by God to death; therefore the word of instruction had no moral effect on them.

[J. P. Lange, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Samuel, p. 76.]

God had determined that “the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor

**That marks the destiny of men
For glory or despair.
There is a line, by us unseen,
That crosses every path;
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and His wrath.**

But other passages indicate that
apostasy

*["Apostasy" as used in this treatise
is a comprehensive term embracing
any departure from God and saving
grace, whether deliberate or casual.]*

is not without remedy. Consider
Paul's important assertion in
Romans 11. He declares that
"some of the branches"
(individual Jews who rejected
Jesus at His appearing) have
been broken off because of their

from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (5:19,20). Robertson writes:

It was easy then, and is now, to be led astray from Christ, who is the Truth. ... A soul from death . . . the soul of the sinner (hamartolon) won back to Christ, not the soul of the man winning him. ... It is ultimate and final salvation here meant by the future (sosei).

[Robertson, op. cit., Vol. VI, p. 67.]

(The duty of believers to recover those who err from the truth and depart from the faith is emphasized in other passages, eg., II Tim. 2:25,26 [note context, v. 18], Jude 22,23, and Gal. 6:1,

St. John does not command intercession when the sin is seen, recognized by the brother, in its fatal intensity; but on the other hand he does not expressly exclude it. Even if the tenour of his words may seem to dissuade such prayer, it is because the offender lies without the Christian Body, excluded from its life, but yet not beyond the creative, vivifying power of God.

[B. F. Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, p. 210.]

Nothing is impossible for God that is consonant with His character and His eternal purposes.

Another passage cited by those who assume that apostasy is

necessarily without remedy is Hebrews 6:4-6. But we need not conclude that the passage teaches that the renewal of apostates to repentance is necessarily impossible. Westcott comments on verse 6:

The use of the active voice limits the strict application of the words ["it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance"] to human agency. This is all that comes within the range of the writer's argument. [B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 150.]

Certainly the Bible teaches that repentance is essentially the work of God and, in any instance, is the response of the

Tim. 2:25,26, where human agency is encouraged and the prospect of success is implied.) What is said by the writer to the Hebrews to be impossible for men is not impossible for God, with whom all things right and good are possible.

Again, Westcott writes:

The present participles (contrast *parapesontas* of the definite past act of apostasy) bring out the moral cause of the impossibility which has been affirmed. There is an active, continuous hostility to Christ in the souls of such men as have been imagined.

[Ibid., p. 151.]

The apostasy in view in

hasten to repent and know again His saving grace. Restoration is not impossible for apostates, including those depicted in Hebrews 6.

Shepardson takes a similarly hopeful view of Hebrews 10, declaring that the apostasy in view is

. . . purposeful and continuous apostasy from Christianity. The word “sin” is in the present participle, which denotes not a single act of unbelief, but a state or condition of unbelief. [Cf. Lange on Heb. 10:26, “. . . the pres, hamartanonton marks habitual in contrast with transient denial.”] Those described are those who . . . turn away from Christ and

continue..... to turn
away,..... just
as long as we continue in this
state of willful apostasy we put
ourselves beyond the
possibility of
forgiveness.....The
revealed character of God
makes it certain that such
apostasy, if continued, must
sooner or later bring terrible
punishment. Holy love will
compel some adequate
recognition in penalty of such a
crime. Whatever judgment
comes to men will be
commensurate with their
character and opportunities.
Because of what He is, He must
not only punish the wicked, but
also care for His own; judgment
for all will be unquestionably

just. For those who are in Christ, judgment will have no terrors; but for those who have separated themselves from Him and are now living "without God and without hope in the world," it will be seen to be "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Such is our authors renewed warning against the awfulness of continuous apostasy from [Christ], this apostasy being regarded from the point of view of the judgment and looked back upon as a completed thing.

[Daniel Shepardson, Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews, pp. 457-461.]

Shepardson's contention that

Robertson comments:

. . . mere sorrow avails nothing unless it leads to change of mind and life (metanoia), the sorrow according to God (II Cor. 7:9). This sorrow Peter had when he wept bitterly. It led Peter back to Christ. But Judas had only remorse that led to suicide.

[Robertson, op. cit., Vol I, p. 222 f.]

Another passage which has troubled many is found in Heb. 12. It is recorded that Esau, a profane (earthly minded) person, "for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the

sincere, could restore to him the prerogative of the firstborn. The consideration of the forgiveness of his sin against God, as distinct from the reversal of the temporal consequences of his sin, lies wholly without the argument. ... It would be equally true to say that in respect of the privileges of the first-born which Esau had sold, he found no place for repentance, and that in respect of his spiritual relation to God, if his sorrow was sincere, he did find a place for repentance.

[Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 408 f.]

(Irrespective of the chicanery of Rebekah and Jacob, God had rejected Esau as the heir to the

resumption of physical life cannot restore fallen men to a resumption of spiritual life in Christ?

Distinguishing between conversion and restoration, Westcott comments on Hebrews 6:4-6:

Some divine work then may be equivalent to this renewing, though not identical with it (Matt. 19:26). The change in such a case would not be a new birth, but a raising from the dead.....

The end of this renewal is metanoia, a complete change of mind consequent upon the apprehension of the true moral nature of things. It follows necessarily that in this large

sense there can be no second metanoia (comp. v. 1). There may be, through the gift of God, a corresponding change, a regaining of the lost view with the consequent restoration of the fullness of life, but this is different from the freshness of the vision through which the life is first realised. The popular idea of repentance, by which it is limited to sorrow for the past, has tended to obscure the thought here.

[Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 150.]

Delitzsch, however, contends that there is no prospect of restoration for the apostates depicted in Hebrews 6: “No more salvation (says the writer

Appendices

might well have been different.

N. T. Passages Establishing the Doctrine of Conditional Security:		Passages Cited by Chafer as Misunderstood by Arminians:	
		1.	Matt. 5:13 (cited with I Jn. 3:10)
		2.	Matt. 6:23 (cited with I Jn. 3:10)
		3.	Matt. 7:16-19 (with I Jn. 3:10)
1. Matt. 18:21-35		4.	Matt. 18:23-35
2. Matt. 24:4,5,11-13,23-26		5.	Matt. 24:13
3. Matt. 25:1-13		6.	Matt. 25:1-13
4. Luke 8:11-15		7.	Chafer cites the parallel passage Matt. 13:1-8, the language of which
			is not so definitive.
5. Luke 11:24-28		8.	Luke 11:24-26. The key to the meaning of the parable is in w
			27,28, which Chafer omits (cf.
			John 8:51).
6. Luke 12:42-46			
7. John 6:66-71			
8. John 8:31,32		9.	John 8:31
9. John 8:51			
10. John 13:8		10.	John 13:8
11. John 15:1-6		11.	John 15:2
		12.	John 15:6
		13.	Acts 5:32
12.	Acts 11: 21-23		
		14.	Acts 13: 43 (cited with 1 Jn. 3: 10
13.	Arts 14:21,22	15.	Acts 14:22 (with I Jn. 3:10)
14.	Rom. 6:11-23		
15.	Rom. 8: 12-14, 17	16.	Rom. 8: 6,13 (with 1Cor. 11: 29, 32)
		17.	Rom. 8:17 (with I Cor. 9:27)
16.	Rom. 11:20-22	18.	Rom. 11:21

17.	Rom. 14:15-23		
18.	I Cor. 9:23-27	19.	I Cor. 9:27
19.	I Cor. 10:1-21		
20.	I Cor. 11:29-32	20.	I Cor. 11:29-32
21.	I Cor. 15:1,2	21.	I Cor. 15:1,2
22.	II Cor. 1:24		
23.	II Cor. 11:2-4		
24.	II Cor. 12:21-13:5		
25.	Gal. 5:1-4	22.	Gal. 5:4
26.	Gal. 6:7-9		
27.	Eph. 3:17		
28.	Phil. 2:12-16	23.	Phil. 2:12
29.	Phil. 3:4-4:1		
30.	Col. 1:21-23	24.	Col. 1:21-23
31.	Col. 2:4-8		
32.	Col. 2:18,19		
33.	I Thess. 3:1-8	25.	I Thess. 3:5 (with I Jn. 3:10)
34.	I Tim. 1:3-7,18-20	26.	I Tim. 1:19 (with I Jn. 3:10)
35.	I Tim. 2:11-15	27.	I Tim. 2:14,15 (with I Jn. 3:10)
36.	I Tim. 4:1-16	28.	I Tim. 4:1,2 (with I Jn. 3:10)
37.	I Tim. 5:8	29.	I Tim. 5:8
38.	I Tim. 5:11-15,5,6	30.	I Tim. 5:12
39.	I Tim. 6:9-12	31.	I Tim. 6:10
40.	I Tim. 6:17-19		
41.	I Tim. 6:20, 21		
42.	II Tim. 2:11-18	32.	II Tim. 2:12 (with I Jn. 3:10)
43.	II Tim. 2: 22-26	33.	II Tim. 2: 18
44.	II Tim. 3: 13-16		
45.	Heb. 2:1-3		
46.	Heb. 3:6-19	34.	Heb. 3:6,14
47.	Heb. 4:1-16		
48.	Heb. 5:8,9	35.	Heb. 5:8,9
49.	Heb. 6:4-9	36.	Heb. 6:4-9
50.	Heb. 6:10-20		
51.	Heb. 10:19-31	37.	Heb. 10:26-29
52.	Heb. 10:32-39		

53.	Heb. 11:13-16		
54.	Heb. 12:1-17		
55.	Heb. 12:25-29		
58.	Heb. 13:9-14		
57.	Heb. 13:17,7		
58.	Jas. 1:12-16		
59.	Jas. 1:21,22		
60.	Jas. 2:14-26	38.	Jas. 2:17,18,24,26
61.	Jas. 4:4-10		
62.	Jas. 5:19,20		
63.	I Pel. 1:5-9,13		
64.	II Pet. 1:5-11	39.	II Pet. 1:10,11
65.	II Pet. 2:1-22	40.	II Pet. 2:1-22
66.	II Pet. 3:16,17	41.	Chafer cites v. 17 in connection
			with I Jn. 3:10, but misses the sig-
			nificance because he ignores v. 16.
67.	I John 1:5-2:11		
68.	I John 2:15-28	42.	Chafer cites v. 19 in connection
			with Heb. 3:6,14, which he dis-
			misses as being concerned only with
			outward profession.
69.	I John 2:29-3:10	43.	I John 3:10
70.	I John 5:4,5	44.	I John 5:4, 5
71.	I John 5:16	45.	I John 5:16
72.	II John 6-9		
73.	Jude 5-12	46.	Jude 3-19
74.	Jude 20,21		
75.	Rev. 2:7		
76.	Rev. 2:10,11	47.	Chafer cites v. 10 in connection
			with I Cor. 9:27, but misses its sig
			nificance because he ignores v. 11.
77.	Rev. 2:17	Chafer disposes of Rev. 2:7,11,17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21 by asserting that the term "overcomer" is the equivalent of <i>Christian</i> ,	
78.	Rev. 2:18-26		
79.	Rev. 3:4,5 Rev. 3:8-12		

holy office” who trafficked in the souls of men, arrogating to themselves the provinces of God, Calvin labored diligently to expound the Scriptures, and especially to defend the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, according to his conception and definition.

Appendix E

Other Scriptures to Which Advocates of the Doctrine of Unconditional Security Commonly Appeal.

It has been our purpose in the course of this treatise to consider the major passages of Scripture to which advocates of the doctrine of unconditional

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INDEX

Abel, his acceptable sacrifice offered Abiding in Christ, more than "fellow-ship" and "consecration," 27

Abraham, an example of enduring faith, 110, 178, 234f.

Adam, necessity of persevering faith in his original state, 22f., 236 Adeney, W. F., 33

Alexander, Joseph Addison, 31

If. Alford. Henry, 61, 109, 323,

363 Animal sacrifice, offered as an act of

Aorists, do not specify point-action, require definition by context, logic, and analogy. 77f.

Apostasy, not the act of unbelievers, 156; meaning of term, 157; actual instances cited

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

GENESIS

2:16,17 22

2:17 23

3:15 23

27:33 If. 326

EXODUS

20:25 265

NUMBERS

4:15-20 265

DEUTERONOMY

Msl 86

32 6. 19 96

21:18-21 143

31:6, 8, 16 ff. 278 JUDGES

16:20 200. 288

SAMUEL

2:25 311

3=14 311

